



The President's Daily Brief

8 October 1973

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

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PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

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Both Syrian and Egyptian forces have made significant gains against the Israelis in two days of fighting. The Israelis are counterattacking [redacted]

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In Cambodia, President Lon Nol has told the High Political Council he has decided to extend the council's special powers for another six months. (Page 3)

[redacted] Brezhnev-

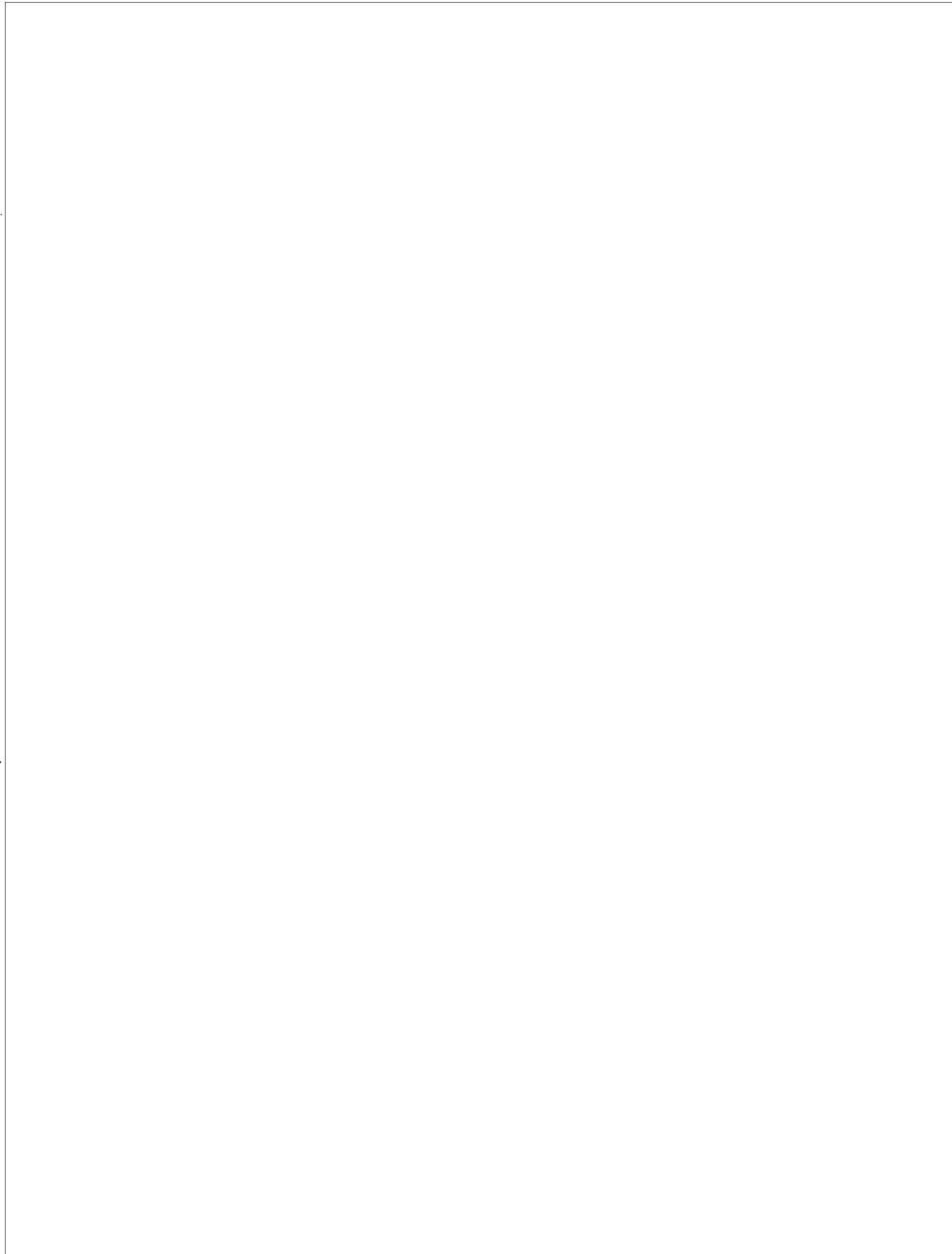
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Tanaka meetings [redacted] start today, [redacted]

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ARAB STATES - ISRAEL

In two days of heavy fighting Syrian forces have advanced several miles in the Golan Heights and Egyptian troops have occupied most of the east bank of the Suez Canal. Major Israeli counterattacks can be expected as soon as Israeli mobilization is completed.

Yesterday Syrian forces, making heavy use of armor, breached Israeli lines at two points, and captured the town of Qunaytirah. By nightfall, Israeli radio claimed to have regained most of the places lost, but admitted that the Syrians still held territory at Hushniyeh in the central sector. During the day the Israelis concentrated on suppressing Syrian SAMs, and claim to have put 80 percent of the SAM sites out of action. Casualties on both sides were described as heavy.

Fighting on the Egyptian front has been less intense. An official Israeli spokesman admits that the Egyptians succeeded in moving 400 to 500 tanks east of the canal by last evening. The full extent of Egyptian movements across the canal is not yet clear, however. The Egyptian armored forces have not yet organized a coordinated drive into the Sinai. [REDACTED]

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The Israeli forces may have launched a series of attacks last night in an attempt to hold ground pending full mobilization. An Israeli news broadcast claimed that such air and ground attacks were undertaken at midnight local time. In addition, Israeli naval forces mounted an attack near Port Said on the Mediterranean. On the previous night Egyptian naval units raided several Israeli positions on the north coast of the Sinai. [REDACTED]

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The mood of Israeli leaders is described as grim as it becomes increasingly apparent that they will have to pay a high price to beat back the invading forces. [REDACTED]

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In contrast to the Israeli leaders, President Sadat seemed confident and relaxed yesterday. He told visitors that Egyptian forces would continue fighting until they reached the June 1967 boundaries, no matter how long it took. Civil defense precautions in Cairo were being much more widely observed last night than in the first night of the fighting, however, with the blackout about 75 percent effective.

Jordan evidently intends to stay out of the fighting, at least for the present. King Husayn is clearly concerned about the mounting pressure to commit his forces as hostilities continue, however. Last evening he said that it would be difficult not to become involved should Israel drive significantly beyond the earlier cease-fire lines or should there be a clear-cut Arab victory. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] Jordan claims that a squadron of Israeli aircraft violated Jordanian territory this morning and that one plane was shot down. Any further incident would make it more difficult to remain neutral.

Other Arab states are rallying with promises of support to Cairo and Damascus. According to radio statements from both Algiers and Cairo, Algerian air units have arrived in Egypt. Morocco's King Hassan is quoted in the press as saying that his armed forces are waiting for Cairo's signal to move to the Egyptian front; [REDACTED]

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Moscow continues to maintain a low profile on the fighting. Yesterday it issued a relatively bland statement on the crisis, blaming Israel for starting the fighting, but limiting the Soviet Union's role to political support for the Arabs. Ambassador Vinogradov met with Sadat yesterday.

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Most Soviet naval units in the eastern Mediterranean have kept well clear of the area of conflict. [REDACTED]

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CAMBODIA

On Saturday President Lon Nol told the High Political Council he had decided to extend the council's special powers for another six months. The council's first six-month mandate would have expired later this month. There was no mention of the National Assembly, which technically has the sole authority to continue the council's full control of governmental affairs.

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At the same meeting, Prime Minister In Tam tendered his resignation, both from the council and the prime ministership, as had been anticipated. Lon Nol agreed to "study" In Tam's request, but made it clear that this did not mean he was accepting it. He may, however, be inclined this time to allow In Tam to depart in view of the President's plans for restructuring the government to concentrate power in his own hands.

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JAPAN-USSR

The Brezhnev-Tanaka summit begins today, and
is unlikely to produce any dramatic results.

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